



## **Access to Health and Human Services in Massachusetts** **Building a “Virtual Gateway” to Programs and Services**

### **What is the vision?**

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In February 2003, Governor Romney announced his reorganization plan for health and human services in Massachusetts. This plan was designed to:

- Improve access for clients
- Improve the quality of services
- Streamline service delivery
- Establish a single coordinated vision for the Executive Office of Health and Human Services (“EOHHS”)

### **What is the EOHHS “virtual gateway”?**

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It is a new way to access health and human service programs in Massachusetts: through a single point on the Internet, the EOHHS web page at Mass.gov ([www.mass.gov/eohhs](http://www.mass.gov/eohhs)). Starting in July 2004, new on-line tools will be available to consumers and service providers:

- **Catalog of Services** A searchable catalog with descriptions of EOHHS programs.
- **Screening** A short on-line survey to determine potential eligibility for services. Multiple programs and services can be selected and assessed at the same time.
- **Intake** An online common intake data collection tool for registered providers. Providers can collect information from a client into one on-line form to generate applications for multiple HHS programs and services. The form is submitted electronically. Deployment of this feature to service providers will occur gradually, over time, starting in July 2004.

These tools will be available for seven EOHHS programs.

1. MassHealth including:
  - a. Children’s Medical Security Plan
  - b. Healthy Start
  - c. Uncompensated Care Pool (starting October 1, 2004)
2. Child Care
3. Early Intervention (Catalog only)
4. Food Stamps
5. Substance Abuse (Catalog and Screening only)
6. WIC
7. Women’s Health Network

### **What are the benefits?**

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These are just a few of the benefits this “virtual gateway” offers providers and consumers:

- Improved access through a single point on the Internet
- A central source for program descriptions
- A straightforward way to apply for multiple programs and services
- Increased access to eligibility information
- Increased efficiency for providers through administrative tools to locate, track and manage applications

### **What will the future bring?**

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New tools and programs will be added over time. Future capabilities will include service tracking and electronic payment functions for certain Department of Public Health programs (the initiative formerly known as “STEPS”), as well as licensing, purchase of services and invoicing.